EE in the Rural West

USING STUDENT INVOLVEMENT TO GUIDE PROGRAMMING

Wallowa Resources

Maintaining the rural lifestyle for the next generation
Who is Wallowa Resources?

Business Development  
Education  
Natural Resource Stewardship

Our mission to implement innovative solutions that help the people of Wallowa County and the Intermountain West sustain and improve their communities and their lands.

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Maintaining the rural lifestyle for the next generation.
Wallow County – A unique rural community

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Working lands and natural resource based economy

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Interact with students socially as well as in educational programs.

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A range of programs that allow us to follow/mentor students as they grow

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WR Youth Programs

- **OWL** – Outdoor Wallowa Learning
- **WET** – Watershed Evaluation Teams
- **HAWK** – High School Apprentice Work Program
- **WREN** – Wallowa Resources Exploring Nature

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OWL Outdoor School for 3 districts in Wallowa County, grades 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>

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WET

A Middle and High School Field Experience, examining and assessing local watersheds

- 5 participating Schools
- Field based STEM learning
- Face to face exposure to natural resource professionals

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HAWK

A 6 week summer internship in the natural resources field

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Friday WREN

- Friday Science Adventures (5th-8th grade)

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WREN Backpacking

- Summer Backpacking trips (8th – 10th grade)

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WREN Explorers

- Day summer camp (2nd – 5th grade)
WREN Camping

- 4 day summer camping trip (6th - 7th grade)

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Student Voice
Using student input to guide programming

- Informal check-ins / Formative Assessments
- Surveys
  - WREN post-survey

I love WREN because it has the feeling of one happy family, a feeling you just can’t get in school. I love hiking with the WREN crew because we talk together, we play games, and the participants opinions matter.
Gabriel, 6th grader
Student Voice
Using student input to guide programming

- Pre and Post Assessments
  - (Check in on student interest + content assimilation)
  - WET pre-assessment

- Exit Interviews
Student Voice
Using student input to guide programming

Other Ideas to try:

- Student focus groups
- More free choice in programs (chance for independent interest and self expression)
- Let them be the expert –
  - Discover what they know and use it!
Benefits of Integrating “Student Voice”

- Kids are
  - Active participants in their EE experience
  - More responsible for their learning and take ownership
  - Engaged in a more inquiry-based model of education
  - More involved in practice with problem solving and critical thinking
Benefits of Integrating “Student Voice”

- Increased student interest = Increased parent Buy-In
- Make’s use of what students know...tapping their hidden funds of knowledge
- Most Importantly...we reinforce that **what they say matters!!!**
Making use of your students’ voices?

- **Small Group Discussion/Brainstorm**
  - Using the handout to guide your thinking, brainstorm ways in which you could include your students input and ideas into your programs (current or future). Share and discuss these with your table.

- **Group Share**
  - As a table group, single out your best few ideas.
  - Choose one person from the table to share these to the group.
Final Thoughts…

At the end of the day…. You have to **USE** the information you get to make realistic changes …otherwise it’s all for nothing.